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PATENT
Docket No. P1230

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANT: NOEL LEE

SERIAL NO.: TO BE ASSIGNED

FILED: HEREWITH

FOR: APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR POWERING MULTIPLE
PERIPHERAL DEVICES FROM A COLOR-CODED CENTRAL
POWER SOURCE

BOX PATENT APPLICATION
COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Dear Sir:

Please amend the continuation application herewith filed as below-indicated.

In the Specification:

1. On page 1, line 1, after the word "is", kindly insert the following:
--related to copending U.S. Patent Application Ser. No. 09/221,761, filed December 28, 1998, entitled "Apparatus and Method for Powering Multiple Peripheral Devices from a Color-Coded Central Power Source" which is, in turn,--

In the Claims:

1. Kindly cancel Claims 1-28, without prejudice.

2. Kindly add Claims 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, and 40, as follows:

--29. An AC electrical power strip apparatus having a plurality of color coded indicia for a plurality of electrical outlets thereon for associating a plurality of peripheral devices coupled thereto, said apparatus comprising:

an input power cord member;

an electrical distribution main electrically coupled to said input power cord member and to said plurality of electrical outlets; and

a housing member for housing said distribution main and said outlets, and for securing said power cord member to said main, said housing also having a plurality of discrete, solid colored areas disposed near certain ones of said plurality of outlets for associating said certain ones of said plurality of outlets with a particular color, and for associating certain ones of said plurality of outlets with certain ones of said plurality of peripheral devices.

30. The AC electrical power strip apparatus, as recited in Claim 29, further comprising: a plurality of sets of solid colored stickers for selective attachment to an interconnecting electrical cord and to each peripheral device of said plurality of peripheral devices utilizing said power strip apparatus,

each sticker of said set being selected such that its color matches the solid colored area to be utilized for powering said each peripheral device, each said set of solid colored stickers being a color distinct from any other said set of solid colored stickers.

31. The AC electrical power strip apparatus, as recited in Claim 29, further comprising: a plurality of solid colored electrical extension cords for selective attachment to said power strip apparatus,

each colored electrical extension cord of said plurality of solid colored
electrical extension cords being a color distinct from any other solid
colored electrical extension cord in said plurality of solid colored
electrical extension cords,

each solid colored electrical extension cord being selected such that its color
matches the color of the solid colored area being utilized.

32. The AC electrical power strip apparatus, as recited in Claim 31, further comprising:
a plurality of sets of solid colored stickers for selective attachment to an
interconnecting electrical cord and to each peripheral device of said plurality of
peripheral devices utilizing said solid colored electrical extension cord,
each solid colored sticker of said set being selected such that its color matches
the color of the solid colored area and the color of a solid colored
electrical extension cord being utilized,
each said set of solid colored stickers being a color distinct from any other said
set of solid colored stickers.

33. An AC electrical power strip apparatus having a plurality of electrical outlets, said
apparatus comprising:
an input power cord member;
an electrical distribution main electrically coupled to said input power cord member
and to said plurality of electrical outlets; and
a housing member for housing said distribution main and said outlets, and for securing
said power cord member to said main, said housing also having a plurality of
discrete areas for receiving a plurality of solid colored stickers and a plurality
of color coded indicia disposed near certain ones of said plurality of outlets for
retrofitting said plurality of outlets, said plurality of solid colored stickers and
said plurality of color coded indicia for associating certain ones of said plurality
of outlets with a particular color, and for associating certain ones of said
plurality of outlets with certain ones of said plurality of peripheral devices.

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34. The AC electrical power strip apparatus, as recited in Claim 33, further comprising:
a plurality of sets of a plurality of solid colored stickers for selective attachment to an
interconnecting electrical cord and to each said peripheral device utilizing said
power strip apparatus,
each solid colored sticker of said plurality of solid colored stickers of each said
set being selected such that its color matches the color of the solid
colored sticker provided on the area,
each said set of solid colored stickers being a color distinct from any other said
set of solid colored stickers.

35. The AC electrical power strip apparatus, as recited in Claim 33, further comprising:
a plurality of solid colored electrical extension cords for selective attachment to said
power strip apparatus,
each solid colored electrical extension cord of said plurality of solid colored
electrical extension cords being a color distinct from any other solid
colored electrical extension cord in said plurality of solid colored
electrical extension cords,
each solid colored electrical extension cord being selected such that its color
matches the color of the solid colored sticker provided on the area being
utilized.

36. The AC electrical power strip apparatus, as recited in Claim 35, further comprising:
a plurality of sets of solid colored stickers for selective attachment to an
interconnecting electrical cord and to each said peripheral device utilizing said
solid colored electrical extension cord,
each solid colored sticker of said set being selected such that its color matches
the color of the solid colored sticker and the color of the solid colored
electrical extension cord being utilized,
each said set of solid colored stickers being a color distinct from any other said
set of solid colored stickers.

37. A kit having an AC electrical power strip apparatus, the apparatus having a plurality of color coded indicia for a plurality of electrical outlets thereon for associating a plurality of peripheral devices coupled thereto, the kit comprising:

an input power cord member;

an electrical distribution main electrically coupled to said input power cord member and to said plurality of electrical outlets; and

a housing member for housing said distribution main and said outlets, and for securing said power cord member to said main, said housing also having a plurality of discrete, solid colored areas disposed near certain ones of said plurality of outlets for associating said certain ones of said plurality of outlets with a particular color, and for associating certain ones of said plurality of outlets with certain ones of said plurality of peripheral devices; and

a plurality of sets of solid colored stickers for selective attachment to an interconnecting electrical cord and to said each peripheral device utilizing said power strip apparatus.

38. A method of providing AC power to a plurality of peripheral devices by color-coding, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an AC electrical power strip apparatus having a plurality of color coded indicia for a plurality of electrical outlets thereon for associating a plurality of peripheral devices coupled thereto, said apparatus comprising:

an input power cord member,

an electrical distribution main electrically coupled to said input power cord member and to said plurality of electrical outlets, and

a housing member for housing said distribution main and said outlets, and for securing said power cord member to said main, said housing also having a plurality of discrete, solid colored areas disposed near certain ones of said plurality of outlets for associating said certain ones of said plurality of outlets with a particular color, and for associating certain ones of said plurality of outlets with certain ones of said plurality of peripheral devices;

- (b) providing a plurality of sets of solid colored stickers for selective attachment to an interconnecting electrical cord and to said each peripheral device utilizing said power strip apparatus;
- (c) providing an indicia element on each said solid colored area with identification information of each said peripheral device to be plugged to a solid colored area;
- (d) tagging each said peripheral device with one of said provided solid colored stickers;
- (e) tagging said interconnecting electrical cord with one of said provided solid colored stickers; and
- (f) attaching the tagged interconnecting electrical cord to the corresponding solid colored area on the AC power strip.

39. A kit having an AC electrical power strip apparatus, the kit comprising:
an input power cord member;
an electrical distribution main electrically coupled to said input power cord member and to said plurality of electrical outlets;
a housing member for housing said distribution main and said outlets, and for securing said power cord member to said main, said housing having a plurality of discrete areas disposed near certain ones of said plurality of electrical outlets and having a plurality of color coded indicia thereon for associating certain ones of said plurality of outlets with a particular color and a particular indicia, and for associating certain ones of said plurality of outlets with certain ones of said plurality of peripheral devices coupled thereto; and
a plurality of sets of at least three like solid colored stickers, one of said set for selective attachment to said each area, to an interconnecting electrical cord, and to a peripheral device utilizing said power strip apparatus.

40. The kit, as recited in Claim 39, further comprising:
a plurality of solid colored electrical extension cords for selective attachment to said power strip apparatus,
each solid colored electrical extension cord being selected such that its color

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matches the color of the area being utilized,
each solid colored electrical extension cord of said plurality of solid colored
electrical extension cords being a color distinct from any other solid
colored electrical extension cord in said plurality of solid colored
electrical extension cords.--

REMARKS

Claims 1-28 are herein canceled, without prejudice. New Claims 29-40 are herein
added to better describe the present invention. New Claims 29-40 are believed to be fully
supported by the specification, and are believed to be in allowable form. Thus, favorable
consideration of the present continuation application is respectfully requested in light of the
foregoing preliminary amendment, herewith submitted Declarations under Rules 131 and 132,
and these remarks.

New Claim 29 affirmatively recites the present invention's unique features:

An AC electrical power strip apparatus having a plurality of
color coded indicia for a plurality of electrical outlets thereon for
associating a plurality of peripheral devices coupled thereto, said
apparatus comprising: an input power cord member; an
electrical distribution main electrically coupled to said input
power cord member and to said plurality of electrical outlets;
and a housing member for housing said distribution main and
said outlets, and for securing said power cord member to said
main, said housing also having a plurality of discrete, solid
colored areas disposed near certain ones of said plurality of
outlets for associating said certain ones of said plurality of
outlets with a particular color, and for associating certain ones
of said plurality of outlets with certain ones of said plurality of
peripheral devices.

New Claim 30 affirmatively recites a plurality of sets of solid colored stickers for selective
attachment to an interconnecting electrical cord and to each peripheral device of said plurality
of peripheral devices utilizing said power strip apparatus. New Claim 31 affirmatively recites
a plurality of solid colored electrical extension cords for selective attachment to said power

strip apparatus. New Claim 32 affirmatively recites a plurality of sets of solid colored stickers for selective attachment to an interconnecting electrical cord and to each peripheral device of said plurality of peripheral devices utilizing said solid colored electrical extension cord.

New Claim 33 affirmatively recites an AC electrical power strip apparatus having a plurality of electrical outlets, said apparatus comprising: an input power cord member; an electrical distribution main electrically coupled to said input power cord member and to said plurality of electrical outlets; and a housing member for housing said distribution main and said outlets, and for securing said power cord member to said main, said housing also having a plurality of discrete areas for receiving a plurality of solid colored stickers and a plurality of color coded indicia disposed near certain ones of said plurality of outlets for retrofitting said plurality of outlets, said plurality of solid colored stickers and said plurality of color coded indicia for associating certain ones of said plurality of outlets with a particular color, and for associating certain ones of said plurality of outlets with certain ones of said plurality of peripheral devices. New Claim 34 affirmatively recites a plurality of sets of a plurality of solid colored stickers for selective attachment to an interconnecting electrical cord and to each said peripheral device utilizing said power strip apparatus. New Claim 35 affirmatively recites a plurality of solid colored electrical extension cords for selective attachment to said power strip apparatus. New Claim 36 affirmatively recites a plurality of sets of solid colored stickers for selective attachment to an interconnecting electrical cord and to each said peripheral device utilizing said solid colored electrical extension cord.

New Claim 37 affirmatively recites a kit having an AC electrical power strip apparatus, the apparatus having a plurality of color coded indicia for a plurality of electrical outlets thereon for associating a plurality of peripheral devices coupled thereto, the kit comprising: an input power cord member; an electrical distribution main electrically coupled to said input power cord member and to said plurality of electrical outlets; and a housing member for housing said distribution main and said outlets, and for securing said power cord member to said main, said housing also having a plurality of discrete, solid colored areas disposed near certain ones of said plurality of outlets for associating said certain ones of said plurality of outlets with a particular color, and for associating certain ones of said plurality of outlets with certain ones of said plurality of peripheral devices; and a plurality of sets of solid colored stickers for selective attachment to an interconnecting electrical cord and to said each

peripheral device utilizing said power strip apparatus.

New Claim 38 affirmatively recites a method of providing AC power to a plurality of peripheral devices by color-coding, said method comprising the steps of: (a) providing an AC electrical power strip apparatus having a plurality of color coded indicia for a plurality of electrical outlets thereon for associating a plurality of peripheral devices coupled thereto, said apparatus comprising: an input power cord member, an electrical distribution main electrically coupled to said input power cord member and to said plurality of electrical outlets, and a housing member for housing said distribution main and said outlets, and for securing said power cord member to said main, said housing also having a plurality of discrete, solid colored areas disposed near certain ones of said plurality of outlets for associating said certain ones of said plurality of outlets with a particular color, and for associating certain ones of said plurality of outlets with certain ones of said plurality of peripheral devices; (b) providing a plurality of sets of solid colored stickers for selective attachment to an interconnecting electrical cord and to said each peripheral device utilizing said power strip apparatus; (c) providing an indicia element on each said solid colored area with identification information of each said peripheral device to be plugged to a solid colored area; (d) tagging each said peripheral device with one of said provided solid colored stickers; (e) tagging said interconnecting electrical cord with one of said provided solid colored stickers; and (f) attaching the tagged interconnecting electrical cord to the corresponding solid colored area on the AC power strip.

New Claim 39 affirmatively recites a kit having an AC electrical power strip apparatus, the kit comprising: an input power cord member; an electrical distribution main electrically coupled to said input power cord member and to said plurality of electrical outlets; a housing member for housing said distribution main and said outlets, and for securing said power cord member to said main, said housing having a plurality of discrete areas disposed near certain ones of said plurality of electrical outlets and having a plurality of color coded indicia thereon for associating certain ones of said plurality of outlets with a particular color and a particular indicia, and for associating certain ones of said plurality of outlets with certain ones of said plurality of peripheral devices coupled thereto; and a plurality of sets of at least three like solid colored stickers, one of said set for selective attachment to said each area, to an interconnecting electrical cord, and to a peripheral device utilizing said power strip apparatus. New Claim 40 affirmatively recites a plurality of solid colored electrical extension cords for selective

attachment to said power strip apparatus in the kit of Claim 39.

The solid colored areas, or areas being retrofitted by solid colored stickers, of the present invention are substantially more prominent to the human eye than the cited art colored rings or stripes. In order to visualize this concept, Applicant refers the Examiner to the physiological concept of *visual acuity*, with respect to the claimed invention. Two classes of photoreceptors reside in the human eye, rods and cones. Rods perceive light and dark while cones perceive color. *Cones are usually concentrated in an area of the retina where the most direct beams will fall*, the area of greatest concentration being the *fovea centralis*. Ross M. Durham explains:¹

The fovea centralis is directly behind the lens, positioned to be right in the middle of images that enter the eye. It is the focal point of our visual field - the center of optical precision. It's the optic zone where the highest concentration of visual receptors exists; hence, it has the finest "grain" and is the point in the eye of greatest visual acuity. Nearly all the receptors in the human fovea are cones, and there are a great many of them packed into its square millimeter. This is the part of the eye that perceives details for us.

Thus, the greatest visual acuity and the greatest visual efficacy, as human factors, are provided by the present invention use of solid colored areas and solid colored stickers. By so tailoring the solid colored components in Applicant's apparatus, the user will be able to better see and follow a pathway from a given peripheral device to its respective connection at the housing member of the power strip of the present invention. In essence, camouflage (e.g., stripes, rings, etc.) is the antithesis of the present invention. Professors of Environmental Psychology, Drs. Patricia Valdez and Albert Mehrabian, explain the psychology of color perception:²

"Showiness" (assumed here to be indicative of the arousing quality of a color) correlated positively with saturation and

¹Robert M. Durham, Human Physiology - Functions of the Human Body, p. 262 (Wm. C. Brown, publishers, 1989).

²Patricia Valdez and Albert Mehrabian, Effects of Color on Emotion, J. of Experimental Psychology: General, V. 123, p. 396-397, American Psychological Association, Inc. (1994).

brightness. Furthermore, "calmness" (assumed to be indicative of the nonarousing quality of a color) correlated negatively with brightness. Together, these results suggest that arousal is a positive correlate of color saturation and brightness.

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The following effects of hue were evident across the 23 samples as a group: ... *grey was bad, weak, and inactive*; ... and *color was good and active*. In addition, ..., and *activity was strongly associated with color (vs. no color)*.

Further, the psychology of *patterned* images (e.g., broken by rings and stripes) versus *solid* images (e.g., uniform blocks of color) is described by Drs. James A. Russell and Albert Mehrabian as an environmental variable in consumer research:³

Psychologists have traditionally explained a person's behavior in general - and consumer behavior in particular - as a function of two classes of variables: those variables describing differences in environments (an environment being anything that is external to the person whose behavior is being explained and that can be measures independently of that person - ...) and those variables describing differences in the persons (whatever a person brings with him to the environment and that can be measured independently of the environment).

...

We first turned to the studies of perception The variables included hue, brightness, and saturation of colors; We therefore turned to evidence on cross-modality in which an individual is stimulated. ... there are basic responses to all types of stimuli. ... from ... color patches to whole environments filled with ... changing physical inputs.

...

... But information theory ... provides a powerful concept that helps describe the arousing quality of stimuli: the information rate of an environment. Environments that include more novel, complex, intense, unfamiliar, improbable, changing, moving, or uncertain aspects are greater in information rate.

Thus, simple environments (e.g., color patches such as in the present invention), having a lower information rate than complex environments (e.g., colored rings around grey outlets in

³James A. Russell and Albert Mehrabian, *Environmental Variables in Consumer Research*, J. of Consumer Research, V. 3, pp. 62-63 (June, 1976).

related art), are more efficiently perceived and recognized by the user as the mental processing rate is inversely proportional to the information rate of the environment. Conversely, patterned images require considerably greater visual and mental processing than do solid images. Therefore, Applicant's integral or retrofitted solid color coding as applied to a an
5 electrical power strip, intermediate cords, and peripheral devices provides faster, superior visual and mental recognition. In further support, please see herewith submitted Declarations of Dr. Albert Mehrabian, under Rules 131 and 132.

In addition, the very purpose of the present invention is *not* to hardwire. Thus, the present invention provides nearly unlimited flexibility in allowing the user of any type of
10 electronic peripheral device to customize his/her electronic "hook-ups" without "hang-ups" to an AC power strip. Since the color-coding is applied to a plug strip rather than to a specialized electronic apparatus, the user may connect *any* peripheral device to *any* outlet with *any* interconnect that he/she so chooses. The present invention allows the user to designate (via the retrofitting option) the color-coding, because the interconnects and the stickers are not
15 "hardwired." Only the present application teaches the unique set of features comprising: (a) color-coding of a power strip using *solid* colors for each power outlet (See Claims 29, 30, 31, 32); (b) power cords in solid colors to correspond to the colors in the power strip, or, alternatively, colored stickers that can be attached to existing power cords supplied by manufacturers (See Claim 31); (c) colored labels for retrofitting an existing power strip (See
20 herein amended Claims 33) or, alternatively, colored stickers with labels that can be attached to existing cords and/or equipment (See Claim 32); and (d) a plurality of power outlets in conjunction with corresponding different solid colors for each outlet (See Claims 29, 33, 37, 38, 39).

Also, areas of the housing member are either integrally or retrofittedly provided with
25 solid color coded stickers and solid color coded indicia for distinguishing and associating a particular peripheral device to be electrically engaged at an outlet. Thus, while the solid colored stickers serve to identify the pathway (via any intermediate combination of cords) to a peripheral device, either a solid colored area of the housing member or a solid colored sticker having an integrally formed indicia for identifying that device (e.g., symbols, numbers,
30 words, or acronyms) is provided in the present invention.

Conclusion:

Accordingly, new Claims 29-40 are presented to better describe the invention. Claims 1-28 are herein canceled without prejudice. In view of the foregoing preliminary amendment and remarks, favorable consideration by the Examiner and allowance of new Claims 29-40 are kindly requested. Further, Applicant has herewith submitted affidavits, under Rules 131, concerning facts in support of antedating related art, and under Rule 132, concerning facts in support of secondary considerations and the unique human factors (technical) considerations with respect to the present claimed invention.

Respectfully submitted,



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